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LB 759

should do regarding cigarette tax increase, and that would probably give us just as accurate result. But, again, I rise in opposition to this amendment. It's unfair. It places an undue burden on a small proportion of our society and it also impacts our retailers and our convenience stores and things of that in Nebraska. So I rise in opposition to this. I think we should maintain the course, move Senator Brashear's package, the total package, over to Select File and go from there. I do find it interesting, Senator Brashear mentioned that the administration is involved in this and what their intent is is to increase the cigarette tax and then gut the rest of the bill. I don't want to say that's outrageous but I find that rather interesting at this early stage of debate. I think it's inappropriate. I think we should maintain the course, move this bill as a package over to Select File, and go from there. Again, I rise in opposition to Senator Thompson's amendment. Thank you.

PRESIDENT HEINEMAN: Thank you, Senator Bourne. The Chair recognizes Senator Brashear.

SENATOR BRASHEAR: Mr. President, thank you. Members of the body, others have spoken with depth and breadth and specifics and actual knowledge about why we would not want to do this additional cigarette tax increase and I'm...so I'm going to devote myself to returning to the concept of strategy and tactics, because in my ninth year here, I kind of see how this will play out. If you want, if you want to deal with further increasing or decreasing, and I'm quite certain we won't decrease, but if you want to deal with increasing and decreasing cigarette and tobacco taxes as we go along, this is the bill that will allow you to do it in the next 23 days. It's already postured that way. It makes permanent the 30-cent tax increase that we did last time. And I respectfully suggest there is a lot more to what Nebraska needs to do with regard to its economy and its structure than how it treats its smokers. Simplistic solutions like 10 percent or 55 cents a pack handle real well in the media, but if you, as a policymaker representing your constituents, want to talk about what is the right competitive sales tax rate in this region, and how do we place ourselves in the marketplace, this is the bill. If you want to talk about what is right, and if you think so anything is what's wrong with